

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 through 53 are pending in the application.

No amendments are made to the claims.

1 1. (Previously Presented) A container manager, comprising:

2 a housing comprised of a plurality of sidewalls bearing a removable lid,
3 forming a container having a closed interior while said lid is in complete engagement with
4 said housing, and providing an open interior able to removably receive items within said
5 open interior while said lid is dislodged from said complete engagement;

6 a port disposed to conduct data signals through said housing;

7 a control stage comprised of a memory storing information specific to said
8 container, said control stage being mounted entirely within and being completely encased
9 by said container during said complete engagement, and being operationally coupled to
10 provide communication with said interior via said port, and generating a control signal in
11 dependence upon disposition of said port relative to a source of said data signals, in
12 dependence upon disposition of said container within a scheme for generation of said data
13 signals, and in response to occurrence of a coincidence between a data key received among
14 said data signals via said port and a data sequence obtained by said control stage in
15 dependence upon said information stored within said memory; and

16 a moveable latch disposed to engage said lid and hinder removal of said lid
17 from said complete engagement, and to respond to said control signal by releasing said lid
18 from said complete engagement.

1 2. (Original) The container manager of claim 1, further comprised of a socket
2 mounted within said housing providing said port.

1 3. (Original) The container manager of claim 1, further comprised of an infrared

2 receiver mounted within said housing providing said port.

1 4. (Original) The container manager of claim 1, further comprised of an antenna
2 mounted within said housing providing said port.

1 5. (Original) The container manager of claim 1, further comprised of:
2 a microprocessor based host computer operationally coupled to said controller
3 via said port, generating said data key; and
4 a data cable coupling said host computer to said port.

1 6. (Original) The container manager of claim 1, further comprised of:
2 a microprocessor based host computer operationally coupled to said controller
3 via said port, generating said data key; and
4 a local area network coupling said host computer to said port.

1 7. (Original) The container manager of claim 1, further comprised of:
2 a microprocessor based host computer operationally coupled to said controller
3 via said port, generating said data key;
4 said port comprising a first antenna mounted on one of said sidewalls;
5 a data transceiver connecting said first antenna and said controller; and
6 a second antenna driven by said host computer, operationally connecting said
7 host computer to said first antenna.

1 8. (Original) The container manager of claim 1, further comprised of:
2 a microprocessor based host computer operationally coupled to said controller
3 via said port, generating said data key;
4 an infrared transmitter driven by said host computer to broadcast an infrared

5 signal corresponding to said data key; and
6 an infrared receiver mounted in one of said sidewalls, disposed to receive said
7 data key from said infrared transmitter.

1 9. (Original) The container manager of claim 1, further comprised of:
2 a microprocessor based host computer operationally coupled to said controller
3 via said port, generating said data key;
4 a first infrared transmitter and receiver driven by said host computer to
5 broadcast an infrared signal corresponding to said data key; and
6 a second infrared transmitter and receiver mounted in one of said sidewalls,
7 disposed to receive said data key from said infrared transmitter, and to transmit operational
8 communications from said controller to said host computer via said first infrared transmitter
9 and receiver.

1 10. (Original) The container manager of claim 1, further comprised of:
2 said controller generating an alarm signal in response to an unauthorized
3 interruption of said communication via said port; and
4 an alarm driven by said controller to broadcast an indication of said
5 unauthorized interruption in response to said alarm signal.

1 11. (Original) The container manager of claim 1, further comprised of:
2 a microprocessor based host computer operationally coupled to said controller
3 via said port, periodically making a determination of whether said an unauthorized
4 interruption of said communication has occurred; and
5 an alarm driven by said host computer to broadcast an indication of said
6 unauthorized interruption in dependence upon said determination.

1 12. (Previously Presented) The container manager of claim 1, further comprised of:
2 said controller generating an alarm signal in response to an unauthorized
3 interruption of said communication via said port;
4 a first alarm driven by said host computer to broadcast an indication of said
5 unauthorized interruption in response to said alarm signal;
6 a microprocessor based host computer operationally coupled to said controller
7 via said port, periodically making a determination of whether said unauthorized interruption
8 of said communication has occurred; and
9 a second alarm driven by said host computer to broadcast an indication of said
10 unauthorized interruption in dependence upon said determination.

1 13. (Previously Presented) A container manager, comprising:
2 a housing comprised of a plurality of sidewalls bearing a movable lid, forming
3 a container having a closed interior while said lid is in complete engagement with said
4 housing, and providing an open interior able to removably receive cargo within said open
5 interior after movement of said lid from said complete engagement;
6 a port mounted to pass data signals through said housing; and
7 a controller comprised of a memory storing information specific to said
8 container, said controller being mounted entirely within said container, being completely
9 encased by said container during said complete engagement, and being operationally coupled
10 to provide communication by data signals with said interior via said port and to operationally
11 respond to data signals received from sources external to said container via said port by
12 regulating said movement in dependence upon said information, and establish an alarm
13 condition in response to an unauthorized interruption of said communication via said port.

1 14. (Original) The container manager of claim 13, further comprised of a socket
2 mounted within said housing providing said port.

1 15. (Original) The container manager of claim 13, further comprised of an infrared
2 receiver mounted within said housing providing said port.

1 16. (Original) The container manager of claim 13, further comprised of an antenna
2 mounted within said housing providing said port.

1 17. (Original) The container manager of claim 13, further comprised of:
2 a microprocessor based host computer operationally coupled to said controller
3 via said port, generating said data signals; and
4 a data cable coupling said host computer to said port while conveying said data
5 signals to said controller via said port.

1 18. (Original) The container manager of claim 13, further comprised of:
2 a microprocessor based host computer operationally coupled to said controller
3 via said port, generating said data signals; and
4 a local area network coupling said host computer to said port while conveying
5 said data signals to said controller via said port.

1 19. (Original) The container manager of claim 13, further comprised of:
2 a microprocessor based host computer operationally coupled to said controller
3 via said port, generating said data signals;
4 said port comprising a first antenna mounted on one of said sidewalls;
5 a data transceiver connecting said first antenna and said controller; and
6 a second antenna driven by said host computer, operationally connecting said
7 host computer to said first antenna while conveying said data signals to said controller via
8 said first antenna.

1 20. (Original) The container manager of claim 13, further comprised of:

2 a microprocessor based host computer operationally coupled to said controller
3 via said port, generating said data signals;

4 an infrared transmitter driven by said host computer to broadcast an infrared
5 signal corresponding to said data signals; and

6 an infrared receiver mounted in one of said sidewalls, disposed to receive and
7 convey to said controller said data signals from said infrared transmitter.

1 21. (Original) The container manager of claim 13, further comprised of:

2 a microprocessor based host computer operationally coupled to said controller
3 via said port, generating said data key;

4 a first infrared transmitter and receiver driven by said host computer to
5 broadcast an infrared signal corresponding to said data key; and

6 a second infrared transmitter and receiver mounted in one of said sidewalls,
7 disposed to receive said data key from said infrared transmitter, and to transmit operational
8 communications from said controller to said host computer via said first infrared transmitter
9 and receiver.

1 22. (Previously Presented) The container manager of claim 14, further comprised of:

2 said controller generating a control signal in response to occurrence of a
3 coincidence between a data key received via said port and a data sequence obtained by said
4 control stage in dependence upon information stored within said memory; and

5 an electromechanical latch responding to an absence of said control signal by
6 hindering said movement of said lid from said complete engagement.

1 23. (Previously Presented) A container manager, comprising:

2 a housing comprised of a plurality of sidewalls bearing a removable lid,
3 forming a container having a closed interior while said lid is in complete engagement with
4 said housing, and providing an open interior able to removably receive items within said
5 open interior while said lid is dislodged from said complete engagement;

6 a port disposed to conduct data signals through said housing;

7 a control stage comprised of a memory, said control stage being mounted on
8 said container and being operationally coupled to provide communication with said interior
9 via said port, and generating a control signal in response to occurrence of a coincidence
10 between a data key received among said data signals via said port and a data sequence
11 obtained by said control stage in dependence upon information stored within said memory,
12 in dependence upon disposition of said port relative to a source of said data signals and in
13 dependence upon disposition of said container within a timed scheme for generation of said
14 data signals;

15 a microprocessor based host computer sited externally to said container, said
16 host computer comprising a keyboard initiating formation of said data signals and a monitor
17 driven by said host computer to visually display video images, said host computer being
18 operationally coupled to said port and participating in said communication by generating said
19 data signals; and

20 an electromechanical latch disposed to engage said lid and hinder removal of
21 said lid from said complete engagement, and to respond to said control signal by releasing
22 said lid from said complete engagement.

1 24. (Original) The container manager of claim 23, further comprised of a data cable
2 coupling said host computer to said port.

1 25. (Original) The container manager of claim 24, further comprised of a local area
2 network coupling said host computer to said port.

1 26. (Original) The container manager of claim 25, further comprised of:
2 said port comprising a first antenna mounted on one of said sidewalls;
3 a data transceiver connecting said first antenna and said controller; and
4 a second antenna driven by said host computer, operationally connecting said
5 host computer to said first antenna.

1 27. (Original) The container manager of claim 26, further comprised of:
2 an infrared transmitter driven by said host computer to broadcast an infrared
3 signal corresponding to said data key; and
4 an infrared receiver mounted in one of said sidewalls, disposed to receive said
5 data key from said infrared transmitter.

1 28. (Original) The container manager of claim 27, further comprised of:
2 a first infrared transmitter and receiver driven by said host computer to
3 broadcast an infrared signal corresponding to said data key; and
4 a second infrared transmitter and receiver mounted in one of said sidewalls,
5 disposed to receive said data key from said infrared transmitter, and to transmit operational
6 communications from said controller to said host computer via said first infrared transmitter
7 and receiver.

1 29. (Previously Presented) A container manager, comprising:
2 a housing selectively opening an interior able to removably receive and release
3 cargo and enclosing said interior to bar removal of any cargo within said interior;
4 at least one port disposed to pass data signals through said housing;
5 a microprocessor-based control stage encased within said housing, comprised
6 of a memory maintaining information specific to said housing, said control stage being

7 operationally coupled to participate in communication from said interior via data signals
8 conducted through said port with a host computer sited externally to said container, said
9 control stage responding to data signals received via said port by selectively accommodating
10 said release from said enclosed interior in dependence upon said information, and creating
11 an alarm condition in response to an unauthorized interruption of said communication via
12 said port.

1 30. (Previously Presented) The container manager of claim 29, further comprised of:
2 said control stage generating an alarm signal in response to an unauthorized
3 interruption of said communication via said port; and
4 said alarm being driven by said control stage to broadcast an indication of said
5 unauthorized interruption in response to said alarm condition.

1 31. (Previously Presented) The container manager of claim 29, further comprised of:
2 host computer periodically making a determination while operationally
3 coupled to said control stage via said port, of whether said an unauthorized interruption of
4 said communication has occurred; and
5 an alarm driven by said host computer to broadcast an indication of said
6 unauthorized interruption in dependence upon said determination.

1 32. (Previously Presented) The container manager of claim 29, further comprised of:
2 said control stage generating an alarm signal in response to an unauthorized
3 interruption of said communication via said port;
4 a first alarm driven by said host computer to broadcast an indication of said
5 unauthorized interruption in response to said alarm signal;
6 said host computer periodically making a determination while operationally
7 coupled to said control stage via said port, of whether said an unauthorized interruption of

8 said communication has occurred; and

9 a second alarm driven by the host computer to broadcast an indication of said
10 unauthorized interruption in dependence upon said determination.

1 33. (Previously Presented) The container manager of claim 29, further comprised of:
2 said data signals exhibiting a first wavelength, and said data signals exhibiting
3 a second and different wavelength carrier signal; and
4 said port being plug coupleable to said control stage, and comprising a
5 transmitter stage converting said data signals into output signals exhibiting said second
6 wavelength, and a receiver stage converting said data signals into input signals exhibiting
7 said first wavelength.

1 34. (Previously Presented) The container manager of claim 29, with said port
2 comprised of:
3 a first unit that is plug coupleable to said control stage when said data signals
4 provided by said control stage exhibit a first wavelength and said data signals received by
5 said port exhibit a second and different wavelength carrier signal, said first unit comprising
6 a receiver stage converting said data signals received by said port into input signals
7 exhibiting said first wavelength, and a transmitter stage converting said data signals
8 provided by said control stage into output signals exhibiting said second wavelength; and
9 a second unit that is plug coupleable to said control stage and interchangeable
10 with said first unit to provide a data connection between said control stage and said host
11 computer when said data signals received by said port exhibit the same wavelength as said
12 data signals provided by said control stage.

1 35. (Previously Presented) A container manager, comprising:
2 a housing comprised of a plurality of sidewalls bearing a removable lid,

3 forming a container having a closed interior while said lid is in complete engagement with
4 said housing, and providing an open interior able to removably receive items within said
5 open interior while said lid is dislodged from said complete engagement;

6 a source of an input signal representing a first class of information, mounted
7 upon and borne by said housing;

8 a port disposed to accommodate transmission of data signals through said
9 housing;

10 a control stage comprised of a memory storing a second class of information
11 specific to said container, said control stage being mounted entirely within and being
12 completely encased by said container during said complete engagement, and being
13 operationally coupled to provide communication with said interior via said port, and
14 generating a control signal in dependence upon disposition of said port relative to an origin
15 of said data signals, in dependence upon said information represented by said input signal,
16 and in response to occurrence of a coincidence between a data key received among said data
17 signals via said port and a data sequence obtained by said control stage in dependence upon
18 said information stored within said memory; and

19 a latch mounted on said housing and disposed to engage said lid and hinder
20 removal of said lid from said complete engagement, and to respond to said control signal by
21 releasing said lid from said complete engagement.

1 36. (Original) The container manager of claim 35, further comprised of said source
2 detecting movement of said lid, and said first class of information indicating said movement.

1 37. (Original) The container manager of claim 35, further comprised of said source
2 detecting a position of said lid, and said first class of information indicating said position.

1 38. (Original) The container manager of claim 35, further comprised of said control

2 stage generating said control signal in response to instructions received by said control stage
3 from said host computer independently of said disposition of said port, independently of said
4 information represented by said input signal, and independently of said occurrence of
5 coincidence.

1 39. (Original) The container manager of claim 35, further comprised of said control
2 stage generating said control signal in dependence of said disposition of said port, in
3 dependence of said information represented by said input signal, in dependence of said
4 occurrence of coincidence, and in response to instructions received by said control stage
5 from a host computer coupled to said port.

1 40. (Original) The container manager of claim 35, further comprised of said
2 container being transportable between an origin and a destination, and said data key being
3 encoded and being available only at destination.

1 41. (Original) The container manager of claim 35, further comprised of said
2 container being transportable between an origin and a destination, and said data key being
3 encoded and being transmitted to said port from said origin.

1 42. (Original) The container manager of claim 35, further comprised of said
2 container being transportable between an origin and a destination, and said data key being
3 encoded and being available only at destination.

1 43. (Original) The container manager of claim 35, further comprised of a
2 microprocessor based host computer operationally coupled to said controller via said port,
3 generating said data signals.

1 44. (Original) The container manager of claim 43, further comprised of said host
2 computer comprising a cellular telephone bearing a graphical user interface.

1 45. (Original) The container manager of claim 35, further comprised of some or all
2 of said data signals being transmitted across or received one of an Internet and a wide area
3 network.

1 46. (Original) The container manager of claim 35, further comprised of said data
2 signals comprising one of an e-mail packet and an attachment to an e-mail message.

1 47. (Original) The container manager of claim 35, further comprised of said
2 information represented by said source comprising a global location of the container, and
3 said control stage generating said control signal in dependence of said disposition of said
4 port, in dependence of said information represented by said input signal, and in dependence
5 of said occurrence of coincidence.

1 48. (Original) The container manager of claim 35, further comprised of said container
2 being transportable between an origin and a destination, and a user at one of said origin and
3 said destination requests via a network a request for some part of said data key.

1 49. (Original) The container manager of claim 35, further comprised of said container
2 being transportable between an origin and a destination, and said second class of information
3 is installed at said origin comprises biometric data matching a person of a human user of said
4 container and said coincidence must be made with biometric data matching said person at
5 said destination.

1 50. (Previously Presented) A container manager, comprising:

2 a housing selectively opening an interior able to removably receive and release
3 cargo and enclosing said interior to bar removal of any cargo within said interior;

4 a port disposed to pass data signals through said housing;

5 a microprocessor-based control stage encased within said housing, comprised
6 of a memory maintaining information specific to said housing, said control stage being
7 operationally coupled to participate in communication from said interior via data signals
8 conducted through said port with a host computer sited externally to said container, said
9 control stage responding to data signals received via said port by selectively accommodating
10 said release from said interior in dependence upon said information and disposition of said
11 port relative to a source of said data signals.

1 51. (Previously Presented) The container manager of claim 50, comprised of said
2 control stage creating an alarm condition in response to an unauthorized interruption of said
3 communication via said port.

1 52. (Previously Presented) A container manager, comprising:

2 a housing selectively opening an interior able to removably receive and release
3 cargo and enclosing said interior to bar removal of any cargo within said interior;

4 a port disposed to pass data signals through said housing;

5 a microprocessor-based control stage encased within said housing, comprised
6 of a memory maintaining information specific to said housing, said control stage being
7 operationally coupled to participate in communication from said interior via data signals
8 conducted through said port with a host computer sited externally to said container, said
9 control stage responding to data signals received via said port by selectively accommodating
10 said release from said interior in dependence upon said information and disposition of said
11 port within a timed scheme for generation of said data signals.

1 53. (Previously Presented) The container manager of claim 52, comprised of said
2 control stage creating an alarm condition in response to an unauthorized interruption of said
3 communication via said port.